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ABSTRACT

Intended for teachers of grades 5 and up, this unit on ancient Rome introduces students to a variety of primary sources, all chosen with the idea that they can be used to form an accurate and informative picture of what it was like to be a Roman during ancient times, and the similarities and dissimilarities between life then and today. The unit contains a list of documents (including a description of each document and a brief synopsis of its historical significance to the unit's theme), the documents themselves, and student activities. The documents are grouped into five sections, each focused on a particular aspect of ancient Roman life. The sections include: "The Theater"; "Sculpture and Painting"; "Religion"; "Everyday Life"; and "The Roman at Home." One of the documents in each section is a Latin passage (followed by an English translation) taken from an ancient work that specifically relates to the category's topic. To help students understand the documents and extract as much information as possible from these primary sources, the unit follows the documents with a series of varied activities divided into seven categories. The categories complement the division of the documents, introduce students to historical documents, and show how Latin words continue to live in the English language. Activities in the unit allow students to practice the following skills and strategies: collecting, organizing, interpreting, and weighing the significance of factual evidence to achieve a systematic document analysis; comparing and contrasting evidence from different sources; identifying factual information and separating it from opinion; identifying points of view and biases; and developing defensible inferences, conclusions, and generalizations from factual evidence. (BT)

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